

Totally Awesome Title: Coming Soon!

The family wondered if they would come for them soon. Late in the night, would they hear an ominous knock at their wooden door as their time had come? How long could they stay in their cozy homes before they would be taken away from the lives they had built? Fear trapped them, forcing them to wait for their fate to be determined. Would they stay together as a family or would they be forced away from their loved ones? They heard stories of families being stripped apart. What would happen to them during this intense time? Could they hide in order to escape the camps without being caught and punished? They soon found out that their lives were never going to be the same as they once were. Soon after the war started, they were forced away from everything that they knew. The Second World War was in full swing and they were outcasts, an alien race that needed to be removed. They lost everything and were labeled as outsiders—dangerous, nameless outsiders that the country despised. Even their own former friendly neighbors turned their backs on them, refusing to help this isolated race. People they had known for years now had nothing to do with them. Why did they hate them so much? How did they become a threat to the community? They weren't the problem! How could life change so drastically in such a short time? They wondered these questions and more as they were bused into the camps, labeled as numbers, not people. This desolate place would bring even more issues that they ever knew were possible to their forgotten identities.

A young girl shares her story of her time in the camp with the world. She shares how her family was stripped apart, never to be the same again. Her name wasn't Anne Frank, so who was she? You may think she was a Jew, forced into the concentration camps of Germany during World War II, but she is not. She is a Japanese American citizen forced into the internment camps of the United States during the very same war. She and her family suffered through harsh living conditions, a lack of identity, a stripping away of family ties and total humiliation. How could something like this happen in the United States, a country founded on the concept of independence, though?

Throughout the history of the United States, there have been many triumphs, but there are also shocking truths that many Americans have never heard about regarding their nation built on freedom. Fear led the United States of America to incarcerate over 110,000 people of Japanese ancestry from the West Coast of the USA. One of the only attacks in our history on United States soil, the bombing of Pearl Harbor, led to radical transformations in our country. The bombing of Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941 in Hawaii led to intense trepidation of citizens of Japanese ancestry, including Japanese Americans. The result of these horrific, unfathomable attacks was America's immediate entrance into the war and the later removal of Japanese Americans from the West Coast. When we hear of concentration camps, the automatic assumption goes to the concentration camps during the Holocaust; however, we can draw a comparison between the camps. While the United States did not perform genocide on the Japanese, they did take them away from their homes due to wartime hysteria. Japanese families were forced to leave their homes, businesses, and lives. Parting with almost nothing, they were forced

into isolated camps where they spent several years behind barbed wire. When the camps finally closed in 1945, many inhabitants had nowhere to go. They were affected emotionally and physically during their relocation, which transformed their lives forever. As a country founded on the concept of freedom, we should look on this past with open eyes, learning how to better act in times of need. We learn about the plight of the Jews in the Holocaust, yet we imprisoned hundreds of thousands of our own people during that same time period. Does this make us the heroes that we are often portrayed as or something very different?